

Comfort to mourning Christians.

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A

S E R M O N

Occasioned by the

D E A T H

of his Daughter

MARGARET READ,

Who departed this Life *October 7.*

P R E A C H E D I N

St. Thomas's Southwark,

O C T O B E R 14, 1753.

By *HENRY READ.* K

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. WAUGH, in *Lombard-street*; J. BARBOR, and J. PEYTON, in *Southwark*, MDCCLIII.



SERMON

Delivered by the

DEATH

of the Day

MARGARET READ



Widow of the late Captain

RESIDING IN

St. Thomas's Church

OCTOBER 1755

BY MARGARET READ

LONDON

Printed by J. DODD, in Pall-mall

S E R M O N.

PSALM xxxi. 14, 15.

*I said, Thou art my God, my times
are in thy hand.*

THES E words of *David* when in great distress, have dwelt upon my mind, and been of great use under the present affliction, and therefore I was willing to recommend them to your serious meditation, hoping God will render them of service to you also, whether your circumstances are easy or afflictive.

There are two things especially, on which they lead us to fix our thoughts,

I. In what sense good men may appropriate God to themselves, and have a warrant to say, *Thou art my God.*

II. To shew what an agreeable, comfortable consideration it is, that our times are in the hand of God.

I. In what sense may good men appropriate God to themselves, and have a warrant to say, *Thou art my God*:

In a more general sense, He is the God of all creatures, as He is the universal Parent. He is called the God of the spirits of all flesh, because He is the Former of their bodies, and the Father of their spirits, and their rightful Governor, whether they consent or refuse to pay Him due allegiance.

But He is, in a more special sense, the God of all good men, of all sincere christians, principally on two accounts.

1. Every good man hath made a choice and sincere dedication of himself to his service and honor. *Psalms xvi. 2. O my soul ! thou hast said, Thou art my Lord.*

He hath renounced the devil, the world and the flesh, and is come under a chosen subjection to God thro' Christ; He hath acknowledged his right to and property in Him, as Creator, Preserver and Redeemer, and sub-

submitted to his government and disposal, and is deliberately and fixedly resolved, that whatever others do, He will serve the Lord.

'Tis the language of his very heart, "truly, I am thy Servant, I am thy Servant! " I will be for thee, and not another. Constrained by thy mercies, I present myself to thee a living sacrifice; to thee I yield myself as my ruler, and resolve by thy assistance to study *thy* will, and pay a cheerful obedience, and walk in all thy statutes and ordinances. I choose *Thee* as my supreme good and felicitating portion; whom have I in heaven but *Thee*? and there is none upon earth, whom I desire in comparison with *Thee*."

2. God hath accepted his dedication, and taken him into a near relation thro' *Jesus Christ*.

He owns every sincere christian as a friend, yea as a child. *John i. 12. to as many as received Him, to them He gave power to become the sons of God, even to them who believe on his name. 2 Cor. vi. 16, 17. I will be your God and you shall be my people, touch not the*
unclean

unclean thing, and I will receive you, and be a Father unto you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord.

Therefore they have a warrant, as none others to say, Thou art my reconciled God, my loving Father, my all-sufficient Friend, and everlasting Portion, Thou wilt guide me by thy counsel and receive me to glory!

O what a priviledge is this! well might the apostle, as in a rapture, say, 1 *John* iii. 1. *behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the children of God!*

II. But I proceed to the other general head, to shew, what an agreeable consideration it is, that our times are in God's hand.

By our times, I understand our lives, and all the various turns, occurrences, circumstances and events thereof. Our seasons of prosperity and adversity, danger and deliverance, of doing and receiving good; yea death itself.

And when we say these are in God's hand, I mean, that nothing can befall us without his appointment, at least without

his knowledge and permission. As the universal Governor He ordereth, disposeth and over-ruleth all events by his wise and good providence, in the best manner upon the whole, for his own glory and the good of his people. But 'tis proper we should consider this important doctrine a little more distinctly in a few particulars.

I. Our life or existence is in God's hand, from the beginning to the conclusion thereof.

From Him we received it as a free gift, who is the Original of all being, the Former of our bodies and the Father of our immortal souls. *Job xxxiii. 4. The spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life. Acts xvii. 25. He giveth to all life and breath and all things.*

The first man, indeed, was produced by immediate, creating power, but tho' his posterity derive their existence by ordinary generation, yet as God established this order, He is still in the proper sense, the giver of life, tho' not in so immediate a manner, as He gave it to the first of our race.

And

And 'tis He who supporteth and upholdeth our brittle frame, and watcheth over our lives by a constant inspection, and maintaineth the vital union between the two constituent parts of our nature, as long as He seeth good. He is therefore said by his kind visitation to preserve our spirits and hold our souls in life.

And it is in *his* power to prolong or shorten our lives, as He seeth fit. This He claimeth as his prerogative. *I kill and I make alive, I wound and I heal, nor can any deliver out of my hand.* He hath reserved *this* intirely in his own hand, so that we are utterly uncertain how long we shall live, and therefore are directed not to *boast ourselves of to-morrow, since we know not what a day will bring forth.* This night our soul may be required; and this our Lord proposeth as a motive to be in an habitual readiness, *Ye know neither the day nor the season when the son of man cometh.*

2. If by our times we understand the opportunities of being useful, of doing good or receiving and improving advantages for soul

or

or body, these also are in God's hand, and at his disposal.

If persons have an opportunity of acquiring the necessaries and conveniencies of life, by diligence in their callings, by happy incidents in their favor, by the seasonable advice, and kind assistance of their friends, they ought to ascribe it, not to their good fortune or chance, (which are vain words without a meaning) but to the good providence of God, which giveth power to get wealth, or blasteth our enterprizes and reduceth to poverty.

Our gospel-times and opportunities of acquiring spiritual knowledge, and advancing in the divine life, by the diligent improvement of the means of grace, and the influences of the Holy Spirit, are under God's direction, and at his disposal, to continue or take them away; to cut down the cumberers of his ground, or grant them a longer standing in his vineyard.

3. If by our times we understand the occurrences of life, prosperity or adversity, ease or pain, health or sickness, safety or danger and deliverance; these are in God's

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hand,

hand, managed, disposed and over-ruled by his wisdom and power.

Whatever befalls the world in general, or particular nations, plenty or scarcity, peace or war, sickly or healthful seasons, good or bad times are under his direction, in a way of kindness and reward, or correction and punishment. *Daniel ii. 21. He changeth the times and the seasons, He removeth kings and He setteth up kings, He giveth wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the understanding.*

In this sense the words of God by the prophet are to be understood, *Isai. xlv. 7. I form the light and I create darkness, I make peace and I create evil, I Jehovah do these things.* National blessings and calamities are at my disposal, according to your behavior. *Amos iii. 6. Shall there be evil in the city, and the Lord hath not done it?*

And whatever relateth to our persons or families, is equally under his inspection and management. He casteth our lot and fixeth the bounds of our habitation, and maketh a difference between us and others in a way of favor, or displeasure or trial.

If

If sickness and pain enter our houses and arrest our persons, we are taught by Holy Scriptures, that they do not come from the dust, or spring out of the ground, but they are inflicted or permitted by God, and therefore saith *Eliphaz*, *I would seek unto God, and commit my cause unto him.*

And when we are recovered and raised up from the brink of the grave, 'tis He who healeth our diseases, and redeemeth our life from destruction, and crowneth us with loving-kindness and tender mercy. *Job v. 19. He maketh sore and bindeth up, He woundeth, and his hands make whole. He will deliver thee in six troubles, and in seven no evil shall touch thee.*

If our habitations and substance have been saved from devouring flames, 'tis because He watcheth over and causeth us to dwell in safety; for *except the Lord keepeth the city, the watchman waketh in vain.* In short every preservation, every escape or deliverance by night or by day, by land or by sea, is the effect of the divine care and superintending providence. *Psalms cvii. 23. They that go down to the sea in ships see the*

works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep, He raiseth the storm, and he turneth it into a calm. It was therefore a pious, and rational reply of *Job* to his rash wife, when she said, curse God and die; *Job* ii. 10. *shall we receive good at the hand of the Lord, and shall we not receive evil?*

4. The conclusion of our times or lives is in the hand of God. He hath the keys of the unseen world, and of death, and openeth and none can shut, and shutteth and none can open. *Psalms* civ. 29. *He taketh away our breath, we die and return to our dust, Job* xiv. 20. *He changeth our countenance and sendeth us away.*

If a sparrow doth not fall to the ground without his knowledge and permission; how much more is He concerned about the death of a man, and a christian?

All the circumstances of our death are known and disposed by Him, whose dispensations are all right and equal, how dark and unaccountable soever they appear to us. Clouds and darkness are round about Him, but righteousness and judgment are the foundation of his throne.

Hav-

Haviug shewn in what sense our times are in the hand of God, I proceed to shew,

II. What an agreeable, comfortable consideration this is to all good men, who have chosen Him for their God, and study to approve themselves to Him; and here I shall suggest a few hints to direct your larger meditations.

1. He in whose hand our times are, is a Being of infinite wisdom and goodness, and therefore we may be certain that it is only if need be, that we are exercised with affliction.

“ He is my heavenly Father, who will not
 “ chasten me out of humor, and for his own
 “ pleasure, but for my profit; for He de-
 “ lighteth in the welfare of his children. He
 “ doth not willingly grieve or put his chil-
 “ dren to pain, but when there is occasion,
 “ and it would be really unkind to let them
 “ go without correction, and they would
 “ suffer in their spiritual interests for want
 “ of seasonable chastisement. I know, O
 “ Lord, that thy judgments are right, and
 “ that in faithfulness Thou afflictest me; to
 “ prevent or cure some disorder of soul, ir-
 “ regular

“ regular passion or appetite, to quicken me
 “ to duty, to heal my backslidings, to try
 “ and improve my virtues and graces by
 “ proper exercise, and make me partake of a
 “ greater measure of thy holiness, to refine
 “ me from earthly affections, and draw up my
 “ heart more towards the heavenly world,
 and make me more meet for that everlasting
 “ rest, which remains for his people.”

2. Our times are in his hand who will
 not correct us with greater severity ; or put
 more of the bitter ingredient into our cup,
 than is proper.

“ He knoweth what sort of affliction is most
 “ suitable to my case, and most fit to answer
 “ his gracious intention, nor will he continue
 “ his rod upon me any longer than his uner-
 “ ring wisdom judgeth most convenient.”

3. Since our times are in his hand who is
 our God and Father, we may be assured from
 his goodness and promises, of all needful
 support.

“ He will be my refuge and strength, and
 “ a very present help ; He will lay upon me
 “ no more than He will enable me to bear,
 “ his grace will be sufficient for me, and as

“ my day is, so my strength shall be, and
 “ in the most proper season He will com-
 “ mand deliverance by removing the afflic-
 “ tion, or removing me into those quiet re-
 “ gions, where the wicked cease from troub-
 “ ling and the weary are at rest.

“ In short, if I am sincerely devoted to
 “ Him as my Lord, I am sure that all
 “ things shall work together for my highest
 “ benefit, and that these light and momen-
 “ tary afflictions, rightly born and improved,
 “ will work for me an eternal weight of
 “ glory.” These and the like comfortable
 meditations naturally arise from the confi-
 deration that our times are in the hand of
 our God and Father, than which, nothing
 is more adapted to support and encourage
 good men under every sort of affliction.
 These things are written, that our joy may
 be full,

But 'tis time to proceed to the improve-
 ment of the subject.

1. What hath been said may justly a-
 larm the fears of wicked men, and ought to
 quicken them to a sincere and speedy repen-
 tance.

None

None but they who have renounced their sins and devoted themselves to God through Christ, have an interest in his special favor, and a right to trust in Him and rely on his care and kindness; to the wicked God faith in *Psalms* l. 15. *What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or to take my covenant in thy mouth, since thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee?* To a good man it administers substantial comfort to be able to say, *Thou art my God, my times are in thy hand* and at thy disposal; and would wicked men allow themselves to think coolly of matters, it would strike them with terror, that their times are in the hand of one whom they have made their enemy by wicked works, who hateth all the workers of iniquity, and hath power, at any time to kill the body and cast the soul into hell.

Almighty power and justice is armed against you; and tho' his abused patience gives you time and space for repentance, He will not always forbear and wait to be gracious, but will at length ease himself of his adversaries, and take vengeance on his implacable enemies. *Psalms* l. 22. *Consider this,*
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ye that forget God, lest He tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you. Psalm vii.

11, 12. God is angry with the wicked every day; if He turn not, He will whet his sword, He hath bent his bow and made it ready.

Consider your dangerous state, and repent and turn from all your transgressions, return sinner, return to thy offended sovereign, and say with the repenting prodigal, *Luke xv. 18, 19. Father I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son; yield thyself to God as one alive from the dead, and then thou wilt have a warrant to say with pleasure, Thou art my God, my times are in thy hand; what time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.*

2. 'Tis our truest wisdom and interest to fear God and keep his commandments.

For we have an absolute dependence on Him, He hath the disposal of our lives and all our comforts, and therefore we cannot serve ourselves any way so effectually, as by serving God, and securing an interest in his favor and friendship.

Were all our temporal concerns in the hand of a mighty man, who hath it in his power

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to make us happy or ruin us at pleasure ; would it not be our wisdom to keep on good terms with Him, to follow his kind directions, and oblige Him to the utmost of our power ? How much more is it our wisdom and interest to reverence and obey Him, who is our absolute Proprietor Sovereign and judge, who can make our times easy and comfortable, or uneasy and miserable, yea who hath the disposal of us to eternity ?

It is therefore with the utmost propriety said by Job, *Job xxviii. 28. The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding ; Psalm iii. 10. A good understanding have all they that do his commandments ;* for it is the way to an interest in his special favor, which is better than life.

3. If our souls have said, *Thou art my God*, we have reason to trust in Him, and be patient, easy and thankful, under every dispensation of providence.

For our times are in His hand, and the love he bears to us will not suffer Him to neglect our interest. 'Tis the strongest argument to patience and quiet submission which
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the apostle proposeth to the *Hebrew* christians, *Hebr. xii. 5, 6, 9, 10. Whom the Lord loveth, He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. We have had fathers of our flesh who corrected us, and we gave them reverence; shall we not, much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? for They verily for a few days, chastened us after their own pleasure, but He, for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness; now, though no chastening for the present is joyous but grievous, nevertheless it afterward yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness to them who are exercised thereby. Wherefore lift up the hands that hang down, and strengthen the feeble knees.*

Nay, that our times are in his hand, is an argument, not only for patience, but for a chearful, thankful temper. Is He not God all-sufficient? can infinite wisdom err? can absolute rectitude do wrong? can He who loveth us more than we do ourselves, do any thing hard? can almighty power be coutrouled? Is he not able to do for us abundantly above what we ask or think? Is he not every where present to befriend his own

people? In a word, is He not our chosen portion, God and Father in *Christ Jesus*?

Christians! when you are tempted to be melancholy, and indulge to mourning, and say with the good old patriarch, *all these things are against me, I will go down to the grave weeping*; endeavor to compose your troubled minds, by putting a few questions to yourselves. “Whom would I have to
 “choose and manage for me? In whose
 “hand would I desire my times should be?
 “would I wish to have them in my own
 “hand, and carve for myself, and have my
 “own will and way in every thing? would
 “not the consequence of *That* be perpetual
 “blunders, uneasy suspense, anxious cares,
 “constant fears, and at last utter ruin?”
 Whatever we may fondly imagine, it would be a very sore judgment to be left in the hand of our own counsel.

Let every sincere christian then say;
 “blessed be God that my times are not in
 “the hand of my enemies, whose malice
 “might prompt them to destroy me! Thanks
 “be to God that they are not in the hand of
 “my best friends on earth, whose igno-
 “rance,

" rance, mistake, or want of power might
 " lead me into numberless mischiefs ! I bless
 " Thee that my times are not in my own
 " hand, who am utterly unfit to judge what
 " is best for myself ; blessed be God who
 " graciously condescendeth to choose and ma-
 " nage for me ! in thy hand I chearfully
 " leave myself and all my concerns ; in thee
 " I repose my trust, to thee I commit my
 " ways, to thy determination I refer every
 " event, nor would I consent to one mur-
 " muring thought ; behold the servant of the
 " Lord, be it unto me as seemeth good in
 " thy sight, not my will but thine be
 " done !"

Difficult as it is to practise, this is our un-
 deniable duty, and what I inculcate on you,
 I pray and labor to do myself ; and to the
 honor of God's free mercy, I speak it, He
 hath inabled me to say, from my very heart,
*The Lord gave, the Lord made my daughter
 a blessing to me, the Lord hath taken away,
 blessed be the name of the Lord.*

4. Instead of undutiful complaints, we
 have reason to admire the mercy of God,
 that

that our times are so good, as to the nation our families and persons.

The justness of this reflection will appear if we consider how much the universal governor is neglected and affronted by the most. Let us advert to the crying sins of the land, the torrent of infidelity and immorality; the daring impiety and contempt of sacred things; the volleys of shocking curses and oaths; the disregard of the Lord's day and divine worship; the continued prostitution of the Lord's supper; the gaiety, luxury and gaming; the injustice, perjury, drunkenness, lewdness, robberies and murders that abound in city and country, under the clear light of the gospel, in defiance of the positive declarations of the wrath of God against those who commit these things; if we attend to these considerations, we shall see reason to adore the divine clemency, that our land is not desolate and uninhabited.

If we further consider the great carelessness, lukewarmness, and indifference to the best things, among the professors of religion; the want of mutual love and forbearance, and zeal for practical godliness; the
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lamentable decay of family-worship and order, of closet-devotion, yea and of common honesty too; we cannot forbear saying with the prophet *Jeremiah*, *It is of the Lord's mercy that we are not consumed, even because his compassions fail not.*

5. What hath been said should be a powerful motive to all to choose the Lord for our God, and devote ourselves to his service and honor.

Did we consider as we ought and might, that our times are in the hand of God; that we have a continual dependence on Him for life and breath and all things; and that it is in his power to make us easy and happy, or miserable for-ever, we could have no rest in our mind, till we had chosen Him for our God, and become his obedient subjects.

Give me leave to inculcate this on every one that hath neglected to make this choice; at present perhaps, you enjoy health and ease and prosperous circumstances, and therefore God is not in all your thoughts, and you are unconcerned whether you have an interest in his special love.

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But may not you easily foresee an approaching alteration? are you sure that matters will continue easy, smooth and agreeable as at present? doth your mountain stand so firm that it cannot be moved? what will you do in the day of visitation, when sickness or pain will put an end to your gaiety and mirth, and an awakened conscience torture you, and the king of terrors arrest you, and eternity open to view, and you feel you cannot live, and yet dare not die? When flesh and heart fail, and all your worldly enjoyments cannot procure you a short reprieve; what would you then give? what would you not give that was in your power, to be able to say, *Thou art my God, my Friend and Father, Thou wilt be the strength of my heart and my portion forever?*

Will you then call upon Him and intreat his mercy, after having trampled upon his laws and despised the riches of his goodness all your days? alas! it will then be too late, you have no other answer to expect, but that in 1 *Prov.* 24. 25, *Because I have called and you refused, I have stretched out my hand but you have not regarded, but have set at nought my counsel and despised my reproof;*
I also

I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; then shall you call upon me, but I will not answer; you shall seek me early, but you shall not find me.

I would in a particular manner, address young persons, the children of religious parents, to devote yourselves betimes to God and choose Him for the guide of your youth, and commit your concerns into his hand.

I bless God, this was the case of the deceased. She feared God from her childhood, and took much pleasure in his worship and service, not only in public, but in her closet. The seeds of rational piety, devotion and virtue early sown, and graciously watered by the heavenly dews, and nourished by the kindly influences of the Holy Spirit in the ordinances of the Gospel, grew up into the peaceable fruits of unaffected righteousness, of which her acquaintants were witnesses; nor have I the least doubt but she hath entered into the enjoyment of the reward promised by the mercy of God the Father, through the Grace of the Lord Jesus.

I am very solicitous that all, especially my younger friends, should gain some advan-

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tage from this word and providence; to you therefore I would address with as much earnestness, as if I were to speak to you no more, but to step out of the pulpit into eternity.

Remember *Now* your creator in the days of your youth, and seek Him early. Set out betimes in the ways of religion, which you will find to be ways of pleasantness and paths of peace; you have been devoted to God by your parents or friends, who engaged to train you up in the way in which you should go; I beseech you in the dying charge of *David* to *Solomon* his son, 1 *Chron.* xxviii. 9. *Know you the God of your fathers, and serve Him with a perfect, i. e. sincere heart and a willing mind; for the Lord searcheth all hearts and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts; if you seek Him, He will be found of you, but if you forsake Him, He will cast you off for-ever.*

That you may serve Him in an acceptable manner, I intreat you to accustom yourselves to the reading of the Holy Scriptures. Instead of conversing with plays, novels, romances, and idle songs, (the delightful entertainments

tertainments of too many thoughtless young persons) hide the word of God in your heart, that you may not sin against Him.

'Tis a very important question that in the cxix. *Psalms* 9. *How shall a young man cleanse his ways?* the answer is, by taking heed thereto, according to thy word, of which the apostle *Paul* gives this encomium, that can be justly applied to no book separate from the bible, that *it is able to make wise to salvation.*

Remember, I intreat you, the Lord's day to keep it holy, by reading, meditation, prayer, and a constant, serious attendance on public worship; and when you come home, recollect what you have been hearing, especially what was most suited to your own case; labor to fix it in your memory and heart, that you may learn your duty and practise it. If you know these things said Christ, *John* xiii. 17. *Happy are you if ye do them.*

A holy temper and practice, a sober, righteous and godly life is the chief end of all God's ordinances and all the instrumental duties of religion; without which we re-

ceive the grace of God in vain, and can have no just foundation of hope of future happiness.

Let it therefore be your daily prayer,
 " Lord create in me a clean heart, and re-
 " new a right spirit within me; assist me to
 " purify myself, as Thou art pure; to ab-
 " stain from every appearance of evil and to
 " cleave to that which is good."

Accustom yourselves to daily prayer in secret, after having read a part of the word of God; to live without prayer, is to live without God in the world; and if you will not pray to Him *Now*, He will not hear your earnest cry *hereafter*, Lord, Lord, open to us! receive us to heaven.

Finally. I would beseech my younger friends, that upon your attaining to years of discretion, and having chosen God for your Father, and Christ for your Savior, and resolved to be obedient to Him as your Lord, you would no longer neglect to comply with his dying command, to come to his table, and publicly declare you are, and will be his disciples, by eating and drinking in remembrance of his love in dying to wash you from
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your sins in his own blood. — And then let it be your habitual care to perform your vows, and live as becometh christians in all holiness and goodness, looking for the mercy of the Lord *Jesus* to eternal life, when you have done all, acknowledging yourselves unprofitable servants.

This is a short view of a religious life, and this is the only preparation for a safe and comfortable death, and a blessed immortality.

If this grand concern of life hath been neglected hitherto by any one that heareth me this day, I pray, I conjure you to delay it no longer, but be up and doing and God will be with and prosper you.

Let not any vain presumptuous youth say, what need is there of so much haste? we are in the flower of life, the vigor of health and strength, and trust we have many years to come.

What is your life, though young and strong? It is but as a vapor that may presently vanish; or as a flower, that may soon be cropped or blasted and wither. Time is upon the wing, and eternity at hand; it is

appointed to men, once to die, but God hath in much wisdom and goodness concealed the time of our death, that we may be always in a readiness, lest coming unexpected, it finds us sleeping.

The time of youth and health is the fittest to begin and prosecute the work of religion, which cannot be done in a hurry, but requirerh much thought and industry; watching and praying and fighting with our spiritual enemies, for which old age, the decline of life, especially a sick and dying bed is the most unfit season.

Whatever therefore the Gospel requireth, set about it *Now*, and do it with your might, and cry earnestly to God for assistance, encouraged by the gracious declaration of *Christ*, *Luke xi. 9, 13. Ask, and it shall be given; seek and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened; if you, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children; how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy-Spirit to them that ask Him?*

God is *Now* willing to be your God, if you seek Him through *Christ*, with your whole heart. Seek you therefore the Lord,
I while

while He may be found, call upon Him,
while He is near.

This is the one thing needful, and every one that neglects it, and give riches or sensual pleasure the preference to God and religion, will, sooner or later, bitterly repent his madness; but none ever did, none ever will repent his having chosen God for his portion and Lord. Nothing will afford us rational support and substantial comfort under the heavy trials of life, and at the conclusion of it, but *This*, to be able to say, *Thou art my God, my times are in thy hand.*

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delight, by which of life, and as the con-
dition of it, but that to be able to say
I trust my God, my Father in heaven.



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